REMARKS

Summary of the Amendment

Upon entry of the above amendment, claims 1 and 18 will have been amended. Accordingly, claims 1 – 34 currently remain pending.

Summary of the Official Action

In the instant Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1 – 34 over the art of record. It appears the Examiner overlooked claim 31 in the instant Office Action, and the Applicant believes the Examiner intended to insert claim 31 into the Blau in view of Voge in further view of Garner et al. argument. By the present amendment and remarks, Applicants submit that the objections and rejections have been overcome, and respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action and allowance of the present application.

Interview with Examiners Hinze and Hirschfeld

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the courtesy extended to their representative by Examiners Hinze and Hirschfeld in conducting a personal interview on March 10, 2005. In the interview, Applicants pointed out that the primary document of BLAU fails to show the recited tempering device and instead merely changes its configuration to compensate for the temperature changes in the device, not in the ink. To this, the Examiner clarified his position that he believes the primary document of BLAU discloses that the apparatus automatically compensates for temperature, that the compensating of BLAU is a control. Therefore, the Examiner asserts that the prior art device has a tempering device.

Traversal of Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Over Blau et al.

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 1 – 3, 12, 13, 16, 18 – 21, 28, and 32 – 34 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being unpatentable over BLAU et al. (U.S. Patent No. 2001/0013289) [hereinafter "BLAU"]. The Examiner asserts that BLAU shows the features recited in the above-noted claims. Applicants traverse the Examiner's assertions.

Applicants' independent claim 1, as now amended, recites, *inter alia*, a printing mechanism of a machine of the tobacco processing industry comprising: a tempering device, structured and arranged to adjust a temperature of ink in at least one of an ink nozzle, ink supply and metering device. Further, Applicants' independent claim 18, as now amended, recites, *inter alia*, a process for printing with a printing mechanism that includes a tempering device, said process comprising: adjusting a temperature of ink in at least one of an ink nozzle, ink supply and metering device in the printing mechanism via the tempering device. Applicants submit that BLAU fails to disclose at least the above-noted features of the present invention.

Applicants note that, to ensure consistent printing quality, the instant invention provides a tempering device to control the temperature of the ink. In this regard, the Examiner's attention is directed to paragraphs [0009] – [0015] of the instant application.

In contrast to the instant invention, Applicants note that BLAU fails to provide any disclosure of a tempering device, and fails to provide any disclosure of any device for controlling temperature. In particular, Applicants note that BLAU discloses a device for printing in which structural elements change shape in order to *compensate* for temperature changes in the machine. Further, BLAU conveys ink on the surface of a series of ink-conveying drums open to the surrounding air, and the ink adapts to the temperature of the

conveying drum almost immediately. While the Examiner notes that paragraph [0012] of BLAU refers to changes in consistency of printing ink, Applicants note that this paragraph discloses that the apparatus automatically compensates for changes in consistency (and/or temperature), but does not include any structure to control the consistency (and/or temperature) of the ink. In this regard, the Examiner's attention is directed to paragraph [0047] of BLAU, which discloses that changes in temperature can have rather pronounced effects on expansion and contraction of the parts of the apparatus, such that, if compensation were not provided in the manner set forth in the BLAU patent, printing quality would be affected.

Because BLAU fails to disclose a tempering device, structured and arranged to adjust a temperature of ink in at least one of an ink nozzle, ink supply and metering device, as recited in at least independent claim 1, and fails to discloses adjusting a temperature of ink in at least one of an ink nozzle, ink supply and metering device in the printing mechanism via the tempering device, as recited in at least independent claim 18, Applicants submit that the applied art fails to show each and every recited feature of the present invention. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the Examiner has failed to provide any adequate evidentiary basis to support a rejection of anticipation under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and that the instant rejection should be withdrawn.

Further, Applicants submit that claims 2, 3, 12, 13, 16, 19 – 21, 28, and 32 – 34 are allowable at least for the reason that these claims depend from allowable base claims and because these claims recite additional features that further define the present invention. Moreover, Applicants submit that, as the above-noted claims recite additional features of the invention not disclosed by BLAU, these further claims are separately patentable over

the art of record.

Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1 – 3, 12, 13, 16, 19 – 21, 28, and 32 – 34 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and indicate that these claims are allowable.

Traversal of Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

1. *Over Blau in view of Voge*

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 4, 5, 12, 22, 23, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over BLAU in view of VOGE (U.S. Patent No. 6,516,712). The Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify BLAU to include a cartridge heater and heater in the ink nozzle, as taught by VOGE. Applicants traverse the Examiner's assertions.

Applicants note that it is not apparent from the Examiner's rejection how or why one ordinarily skilled in the art would modify BLAU to include the features of VOGE. In particular, Applicants submit there is no teaching or suggestion for combining BLAU with VOGE, since the methods of conveying the ink in each apparatus are distinct from each other. VOGE discloses a conveying method that is pressurized in closed conduits. BLAU teaches a conveying method open to the surrounding air on the surface of conveying elements. BLAU conveys ink on the surface of a series of ink-conveying drums open to the surrounding air, and the ink adapts to the temperature of the conveying drum almost immediately, as opposed to VOGE, which discloses conveying ink in a closed circuit under high pressure to a nozzle. In VOGE, the temperature is controlled and regulated very efficiently over a conveying method open to the surrounding air of the conveying elements.

Hence, the method of controlling and regulating the temperature of the ink according to VOGE cannot be applied to the apparatus according to BLAU. Moreover, Applicants note that the applied documents of record fail to teach the requisite motivation or rationale for combining BLAU and VOGE as suggested by the Examiner.

Further, Applicants note that, in contrast to BLAU, which teaches a printing mechanism for printing a cigarette paper, VOGE discloses an industrial printing apparatus, which does not lend itself to use in the cramped confines of a cigarette production device. Thus, Applicants submit that, simply due to the extreme difference in size, it would not have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify BLAU to include the features of VOGE.

Further, Applicants note that BLAU is specially designed with rollers that change shape and pressing force to compensate for temperature changes in the machine. Thus, because the apparatus adapts itself to changes in temperature, Applicants submit that it is not apparent why or how one ordinarily skilled in the art would modify BLAU in the manner asserted by the Examiner.

Further, as the temperature changes compensated by BLAU relate to temperature changes created by frictional forces in the machine, not ink temperature, to ensure printing quality, it is not apparent why one ordinarily skilled in the art would modify BLAU to heat the printing ink. Furthermore, Applicants submit there would be no reason, suggestion or any type of motivation to consider VOGE in view of BLAU or any combination thereof, such that no proper combination of VOGE and BLAU would render unpatentable the instant invention. Applicants submit that it is not apparent why or how one ordinarily skilled in the art would modify BLAU in the manner asserted by the Examiner.

Thus, because the art of record fails to provide the necessary motivation or rationale for combining the art of record in the manner asserted by the Examiner, Applicants submit no proper combination of BLAU and VOGE teach or suggest the combination of features recited in at least the independent claims.

Further, Applicants submit that claims 4, 5, 14, 22, 23, and 29 are allowable at least for the reason that these claims depend from allowable base claims and because these claims recite additional features that further define the present invention. Moreover, Applicants submit that, as the above-noted claims recite additional features of the invention not disclosed by any proper combination of BLAU in view of VOGE, these further claims are separately patentable over the art of record.

Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 4, 5, 14, 22, 23, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) and indicate that these claims are allowable.

2. *Over Blau in view of Voge in further view of Garner et al.*

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 6, 15, 17 and 30-31 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over BLAU in view of VOGE (U.S. Patent No. 6,516,712) in further view of Garner et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,611,278) [hereinafter "GARNER"].

The Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify BLAU in view of VOGE and in further view of GARNER to include a temperature controlled system for a printing press, including a refrigeration and heating system (Col. 2, lines 2-3), and an ink temperature sensor located in the ink supply system (Col. 2, lines 11-14) that is taught by GARNER. Applicants traverse the Examiner's

assertions.

Applicants note that it is not apparent from the Examiner's rejection how or why one ordinarily skilled in the art would modify BLAU to include the features of VOGE, then somehow further include the features of GARNER.

In particular, there is no teaching or suggestion for combining BLAU with VOGE, since the methods of conveying the ink from the two methods are distinct from each other. In particular, VOGE discloses a conveying method that is pressurized in closed conduits. BLAU teaches a conveying method open to the surrounding air on the surface of conveying elements. BLAU conveys ink on the surface of a series of ink-conveying drums open to the surrounding air, and the ink adapts to the temperature of the conveying drum almost immediately. As opposed to VOGE, discloses conveying ink in a closed circuit under high pressure to a nozzle. Applicants submit that it is not apparent why or how one ordinarily skilled in the art would modify BLAU in the manner asserted by the Examiner.

Further, Applicants note that, in contrast to BLAU, which teaches a printing mechanism for printing a cigarette paper, VOGE discloses an industrial printing apparatus, which does not lend itself to use in the cramped confines of a cigarette production device. Thus, Applicants submit that, simply due to the extreme difference in size, it would not have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify BLAU to include the features of VOGE.

Further still, Applicants note that BLAU is specially designed with rollers that change shape and pressing force to compensate for temperature changes in the machine, not ink temperature, in order to maintain print quality, it is not apparent why one ordinarily skilled in the art would modify BLAU to heat the printing ink.

Applicants note that the applied documents of record fail to teach the requisite motivation or rationale for combining BLAU in view of VOGE, then further in view of GARNER as suggested by the Examiner. The Examiner states that BLAU in view of VOGE or combination thereof does not teach a temperature sensor positioned on or near at least one of the ink supply, metering device and ink nozzle. In particular, Applicants note that, in contrast to BLAU, which teaches a printing mechanism for printing a cigarette paper, GARNER discloses an industrial printing press apparatus (See Col. 1, lines 65-67), which does not lend itself to use in the cramped confines of a cigarette production device.

The GARNER apparatus is directed to a temperature control system including a refrigeration system and heating system. The circulation system is connected to the circulation path of the ink roller. The refrigeration and heating system includes a compressor, an expansion valve, a hear exhanger that is thermally coupled to a portion of the circulation system, a by pass conduit connected in parallel across the expansion valve and a valve located in the by pass conduit (See Col. 2, lines 1-10). Note, the circulation system (27) is a closed system of conduits that circulates a fluid such as water through the ink vibrator rollers (25) and through a heat exchanger in the refrigeration and heating system (33). The refrigeration and heating system (33) provides either a heat source (heat) or a heat sink (cooling) for the circulating fluid so as to provide the temperature regulation of the fluid. Each sensor (31) determines the temperature of the ink on an ink vibrator roller (25), and if the temperature is outside of a specified range, then a controller that is connected to the sensor operates the respective control valve (29) to allow fluid to circulate through the respective ink vibrator roller. The circulating fluid thus maintains the ink in the desired temperature range. (See Col. 3, lines 14-30).

However, Applicants note that, in contrast to the modified BLAU (BLAU in view of VOGE), which teaches the ink sent through the inlet line (66) of the valve (34) passing through a pre-heater (70) that heats the pressurized printing ink (see Col. 8, lines 14-18 of VOGE), as opposed to GARNER that discloses an industrial printing apparatus including a temperature control system (27) that is in a closed system that circulates a fluid such as water through the ink vibrator rollers (25) and through a heat exchanger in the refrigeration and heating system (33) wherein the circulating fluid thus maintains the ink in the desired temperature range. Thus, Applicants submit that, simply due to the fact that the two temperature control systems are distinct from each other (the modified BLAU utilizing tempering apparatus that uses a pre-heater) (the GARNER tempering device utilizes a closed system that circulates a fluid such as water through the ink vibrator rollers (25) and through a heat exchanger in the refrigeration and heating system), it is not apparent why or how one ordinarily skilled in the art would modify BLAU in view of VOGE in the manner asserted by the Examiner, especially since the applied art does not even suggest circulating a fluid such as water through the ink vibrator rollers.

Thus, because the art of record fails to provide the necessary motivation or rationale for combining the art of record in the manner asserted by the Examiner, Applicants submit no proper combination of BLAU in view VOGE in further view of GARNER teach or suggest the combination of features recited in at least the independent claims.

Further, Applicants submit that claims 6, 15, 17, 30, and 31 are allowable at least for the reason that these claims depend from allowable base claims and because these claims recite additional features that further define the present invention. Moreover, Applicants submit that, as the above-noted claims recite additional features of the invention not

disclosed by any proper combination of BLAU in view of VOGE in further view of GARNER, these further claims are separately patentable over the art of record.

Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 6, 15, 17, 30, and 31 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) and indicate that these claims are allowable.

3. Over BLAU in view of VOGE in further view of FELLER

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 7-9 and 24-26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over BLAU in view of VOGE in further view of FELLER (U.S. Patent No. 6,065,402).

The Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify BLAU in view of VOGE in further view of FELLER to include a cooling plate, as taught by FELLER. Applicants traverse the Examiner's assertions.

In particular, there is no teaching or suggestion for combining BLAU with VOGE, since the methods of conveying the ink from the two methods are distinct from each other. In particular, VOGE discloses a conveying method that is pressurized in closed conduits. BLAU teaches a conveying method open to the surrounding air on the surface of conveying elements. BLAU conveys ink on the surface of a series of ink-conveying drums open to the surrounding air, and the ink adapts to the temperature of the conveying drum almost immediately. As opposed to VOGE, discloses conveying ink in a closed circuit under high pressure to a nozzle. Applicants submit that it is not apparent why or how one ordinarily skilled in the art would modify BLAU in the manner asserted by the Examiner. Further, Applicants note that, in contrast to BLAU, which teaches a printing mechanism for printing

a cigarette paper, VOGE discloses an industrial printing apparatus, which does not lend itself to use in the cramped confines of a cigarette production device. Thus, Applicants submit that, simply due to the extreme difference in size, it would not have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify BLAU to include the features of VOGE.

Further still, Applicants note that BLAU is specially designed with rollers that change shape and pressing force to compensate for temperature changes in the machine, not ink temperature, in order to maintain print quality, it is not apparent why one ordinarily skilled in the art would modify BLAU to heat the printing ink.

Applicants note that it is not apparent from the Examiner's rejection how or why one ordinarily skilled in the art would modify BLAU, and that there is no teaching or suggestion for modifying this apparatus to include the various identified features of VOGE and FELLER. In particular, Applicants note that the applied documents of record fail BLAU in view of VOGE to teach the requisite motivation or rationale for combining BLAU in view of VOGE and further FELLER as suggested by the Examiner.

FELLER discloses an industrial printing apparatus, which does not lend itself to use in the cramped confines of a cigarette production device. Moreover, Applicants note that the applied art fails to provide any teaching or suggestion that BLAU would benefit from the use of cooling plate. Thus, in view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that it would not have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify BLAU to include the features of FELLER.

FELLER teaches to provide an inking device that prevents excessive heating of the printing ink is prevented (see Col. 1, line 54-56). FELLER discloses a temperate system (or cooling plate) that is completely different than any combination of BLAU an VOGE.

Applicants submit that it is not apparent why or how one ordinarily skilled in the art would modify BLAU or VOGE in the manner asserted by the Examiner. VOGE discloses a conveying method that is pressurized in closed conduits with a pre-heater. BLAU teaches a conveying method open to the surrounding air on the surface of conveying elements. BLAU conveys ink on the surface of a series of ink-conveying drums open to the surrounding air, and the ink adapts to the temperature of the conveying drum almost immediately. Applicants note that both BLAU and VOGE have temperature heating systems, and that BLAU and VOGE fail to teach the requisite motivation or rationale for combining BLAU and/or VOGE with the cooling plate or feature thereof of FELLER as suggested by the Examiner.

Thus, because the art of record fails to provide the necessary motivation or rationale for combining the art of record in the manner asserted by the Examiner, Applicants submit no proper combination of BLAU, VOGE and FELLER teach or suggest the combination of features recited in at least the independent claims.

Further, Applicants submit that claims 7 – 9 and 24-26 are allowable at least for the reason that these claims depend from allowable base claims and because these claims recite additional features that further define the present invention. Moreover, Applicants submit that, as the above-noted claims recite additional features of the invention not disclosed by any proper combination of BLAU in view of VOGE in further view of FELLER, these further claims are separately patentable over the art of record.

Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 7 – 9 and 24-26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) and indicate that these claims are allowable.

4. Over BLAU in view of VOGE and further in view of FELLER and still further view of Ayres, Jr.

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 10-11 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over BLAU in view of VOGE, in further view of FELLER, and still further in view of AYRES, Jr. et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,810,927) [hereinafter "AYRES"]. The Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify the asserted combination of BLAU in view of VOGE, in further view of FELLER to include a temperature control device, as taught by AYRES, Jr. Applicants traverse the Examiner's assertions.

Applicants note that, as it is not apparent from the Examiner's rejection how or why one ordinarily skilled in the art would modify BLAU to include the features of VOGE, it is likewise not apparent how or why one ordinarily skilled in the art would additionally modify BLAU to include the features of FELLER, as well as include the features of AYRES.

In particular, Applicants note that FELLER discloses an industrial printing apparatus, which does not lend itself to use in the cramped confines of a cigarette production device. Moreover, Applicants note that the applied art fails to provide any teaching or suggestion that BLAU would benefit from the use of cooling plate. Thus, in view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that it would not have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify BLAU to include the features of FELLER.

Applicants submit that it is not apparent why or how one ordinarily skilled in the art would modify BLAU or VOGE or FELLER or AYRES or any combination thereof in the manner asserted by the Examiner. BLAU teaches a conveying method open to the

surrounding air on the surface of conveying elements. BLAU conveys ink on the surface of a series of ink-conveying drums open to the surrounding air, and the ink adapts to the temperature of the conveying drum almost immediately. BLAU is specially designed with rollers that change shape and pressing force to compensate for temperature changes in the machine. VOGE discloses a conveying method that is pressurized in closed conduits with a pre-heater. FELLER teaches to provide an inking device that prevents excessive heating of the printing ink is prevented (see Col. 1, line 54-56). FELLER discloses a temperate system (or cooling plate) that is completely different than any combination of BLAU and VOGE and AYRES. AYRES discloses an ink temperature control device which includes fans which blow air and create eddy currents and help maintain the temperature of the ink (See Col. 1, lines 37-39). Applicants note that both BLAU and VOGE and FELLER and AYRES have temperature systems, and that BLAU and VOGE and FELLER and AYRES or any combination thereof, fail to teach the requisite motivation or rationale for combining BLAU and/or VOGE and/or FELLER and/or AYRES as suggested by the Examiner.

Thus, because the art of record fails to provide the necessary motivation or rationale for combining the art of record in the manner asserted by the Examiner, Applicants submit no proper combination of BLAU, FELLER and AYRES, Jr. teach or suggest the combination of features recited in at least the independent claims.

Further, Applicants submit that claims 10 and 11 are allowable at least for the reason that these claims depend from allowable base claims and because these claims recite additional features that further define the present invention. Moreover, Applicants submit that, as the above-noted claims recite additional features of the invention not

disclosed by any proper combination of BLAU in view of FELLER and further in view of AYRES, Jr., these further claims are separately patentable over the art of record.

Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 10 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) and indicate that these claims are allowable.

5. Over Blau in view of Voge and further in view of DILLIG

Applicants traverse the rejection of claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over BLAU in view of VOGE and further in view of DILLIG et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,024,015) [hereinafter "DILLIG"].

The Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify the asserted combination of BLAU in view of VOGE to include the features of DILLIG that include a pressurized inking system having a pressure monitor to ensure that an adequate ink supply is provided at all times. Applicants traverse the Examiner's assertions.

In particular, there is no teaching or suggestion for combining BLAU with VOGE, since the methods of conveying the ink from the two methods are different VOGE discloses a conveying method that is pressurized in closed conduits. BLAU teaches a conveying method open to the surrounding air on the surface of conveying elements. BLAU conveys ink on the surface of a series of ink-conveying drums open to the surrounding air, and the ink adapts to the temperature of the conveying drum almost immediately. As opposed to VOGE, discloses conveying ink in a closed circuit under high pressure to a nozzle. Applicants submit that it is not apparent why or how one ordinarily

skilled in the art would modify BLAU in the manner asserted by the Examiner.

Further, Applicants note that, in contrast to BLAU, which teaches a printing mechanism for printing a cigarette paper, VOGE discloses an industrial printing apparatus, and DILLIG discloses an industrial printing apparatus, which does not lend itself to use in the cramped confines of a cigarette production device. Thus, Applicants submit that, simply due to the extreme difference in size, it would not have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify BLAU to include the features of VOGE.

Further still, Applicants note that BLAU is specially designed with rollers that change shape and pressing force to compensate for temperature changes in the machine, not ink temperature, in order to maintain print quality, it is not apparent why one ordinarily skilled in the art would modify BLAU to heat the printing ink.

Applicants note that it is not apparent from the Examiner's rejection how or why one ordinarily skilled in the art would modify BLAU, and that there is no teaching or suggestion for modifying this apparatus to include the various identified features of VOGE and DILLIG. In particular, Applicants note that the applied documents of record BLAU in view of VOGE fail to teach the requisite motivation or rationale for combining BLAU in view of VOGE and further DILLIG as suggested by the Examiner.

DILLIG discloses a pressurized inking system having a pressure monitor to ensure that an adequate ink supply is provided at all times, as well as an ink supply portion and ink return portion comprising a closed system. BLAU teaches a conveying method open to the surrounding air on the surface of conveying elements. BLAU conveys ink on the surface of a series of ink-conveying drums open to the surrounding air, and the ink adapts to the temperature of the conveying drum almost immediately. BLAU is specially designed with

rollers that change shape and pressing force to compensate for temperature changes in the machine. VOGE discloses a conveying method that is pressurized in closed conduits with a pre-heater. DILLIG discloses a pressure sensor wherein VOGE has a pressure converter to maintain the pressure within the closed system, negating the need for the pressure sensor. Applicants note that both BLAU and VOGE and DILLIG or any combination thereof, fail to teach the requisite motivation or rationale for combining BLAU and/or VOGE and/or DILLIG as suggested by the Examiner.

Thus, because the art of record fails to provide the necessary motivation or rationale for combining the art of record in the manner asserted by the Examiner, Applicants submit no proper combination of BLAU in view of VOGE in further view of FELLER, teach or suggest the combination of features recited in at least the independent claims.

Further, Applicants submit that claim 11 is allowable at least for the reason that these claims depend from allowable base claims and because these claims recite additional features that further define the present invention. Moreover, Applicants submit that, as the above-noted claim recite additional features of the invention not disclosed by any proper combination of BLAU in view of VOGE in further view of DILLIG, that this further claim is separately patentable over the art of record.

Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) and indicate that these claims are allowable.

Application is Allowable

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that each and every pending claim of the present invention meets the requirements for patentability under 35 U.S.C. §102 and

§103, and respectfully request the Examiner to indicate allowance of each and every pending claim of the present invention.

Authorization to Charge Deposit Account

The undersigned authorizes the charging of any necessary fees, including any extensions of time fees required to place the application in condition for allowance by Examiner=s Amendment, to Deposit Account No. 19 - 0089 in order to maintain pendency of this application.

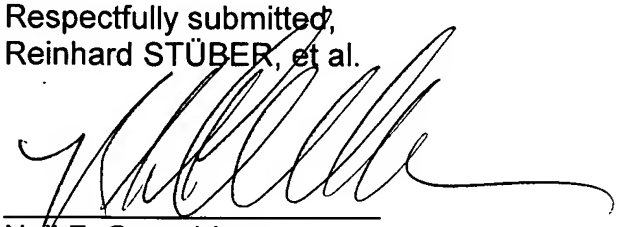
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that none of the references of record, either taken alone or in any proper combination thereof, anticipate or render obvious the Applicants' invention, as recited in each of claims 1 - 34. The claims have been amended to eliminate any arguable basis for formal rejection. In addition, the applied references of record have been discussed and distinguished, while significant claimed features of the present invention have been pointed out.

Further, any amendments to the claims which have been made in this response and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,
Reinhard STÜBER, et al.



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